



3 OF 4

TOMB RAIDER™

SACRED ARTIFACTS



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ANDWORLD DESIGN

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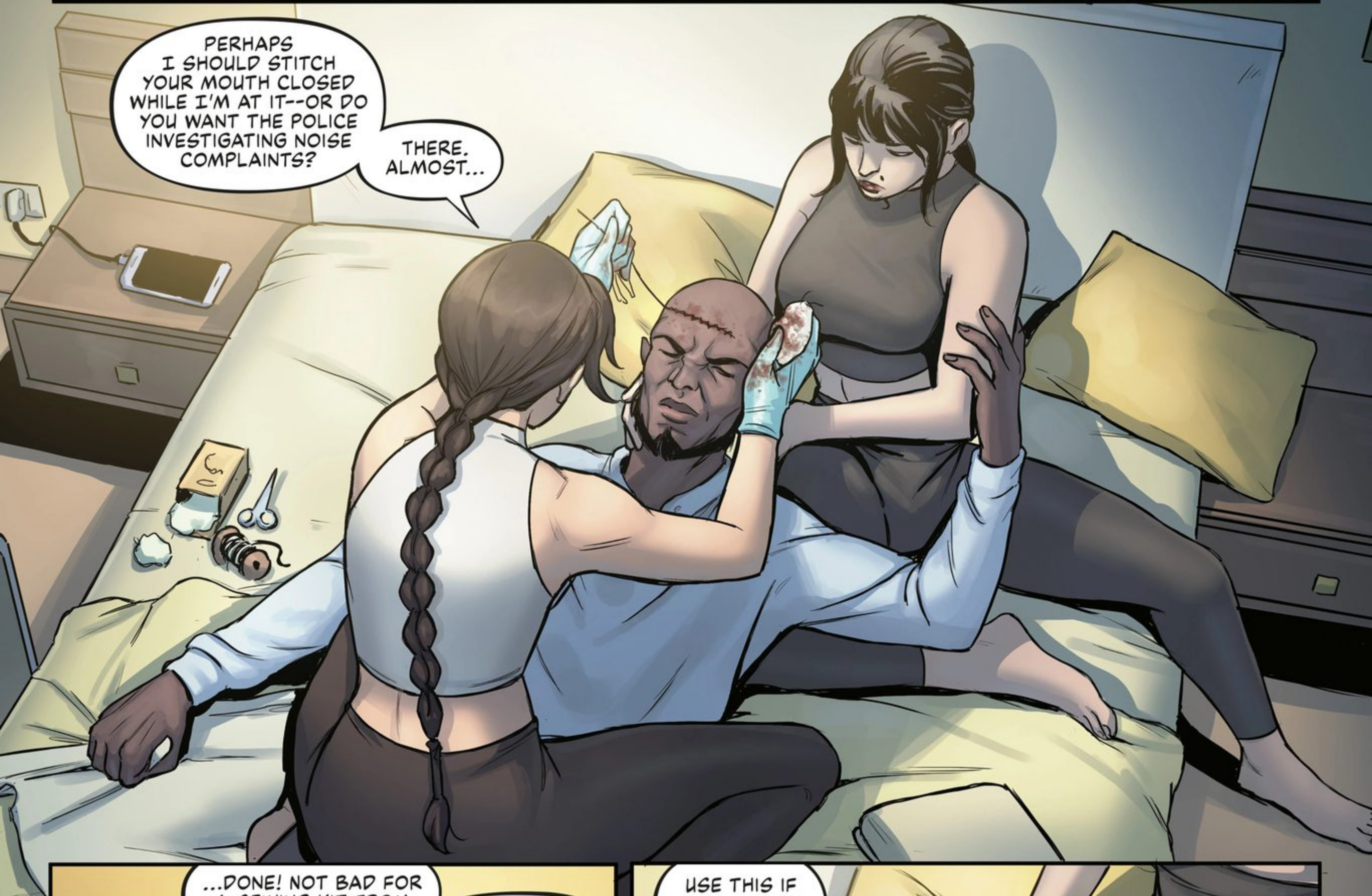
THIS IS GOING TO HURT, ISN'T IT?

PROBABLY.



HOLD HIM STILL.

AAAAAAAH!



PERHAPS I SHOULD STITCH YOUR MOUTH CLOSED WHILE I'M AT IT--OR DO YOU WANT THE POLICE INVESTIGATING NOISE COMPLAINTS?

THERE. ALMOST...



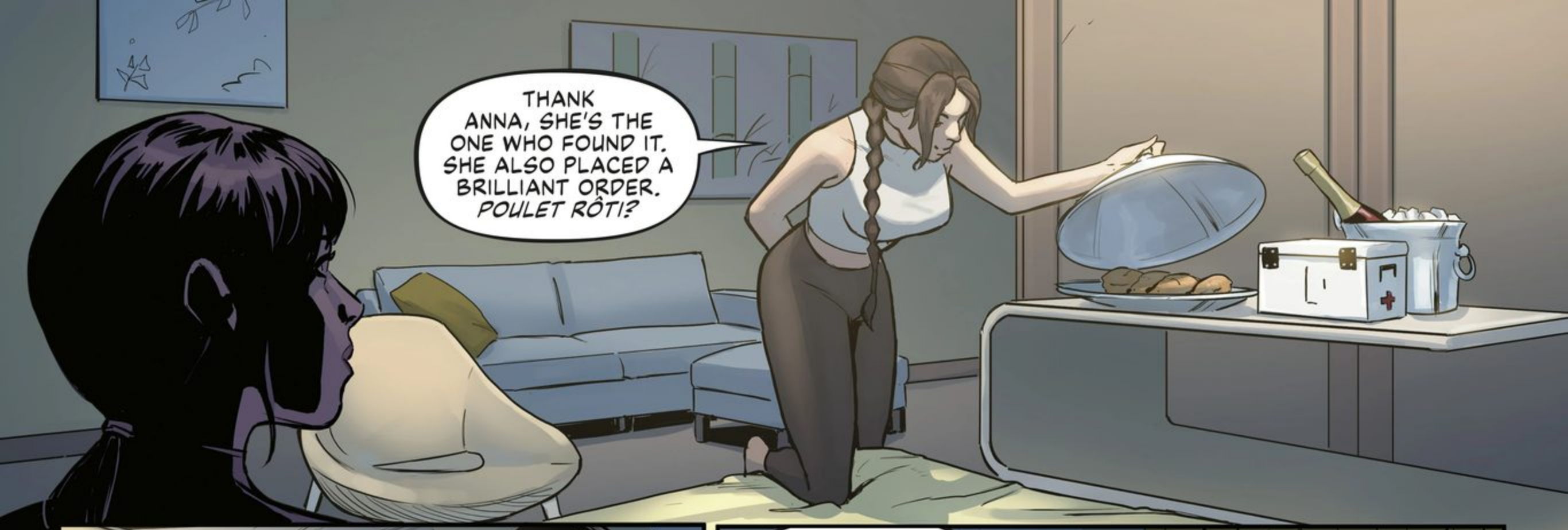
...DONE! NOT BAD FOR A SEWING KIT FROM ROOM SERVICE.

DO NOT TOUCH IT, CARTER. YOUR HANDS ARE FILTHY. HERE--



USE THIS IF YOU WANT TO EXAMINE MY HANDIWORK.

I'LL HAVE THIS COURIERED TO MY CLIENT IN THE MORNING. CROFT, YOU'RE AMAZING.



THANK ANNA, SHE'S THE ONE WHO FOUND IT. SHE ALSO PLACED A BRILLIANT ORDER. POULET RÔTI?



I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DID THIS FOR ME. HOW CAN I EVER THANK YOU?

YOU CAN THANK ME BACK IN LONDON WHERE IT'S SAFE. OUR FLIGHT LEAVES TOMORROW.



I CAN'T LEAVE TOMORROW! I PROMISED TO FINISH THIS JOB AND--

YOU PROMISED **ME** NOTHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN! LOOK AT YOU! CI SEI O CI FAI?



--AND I HAVE TO HELP LARA IN ITALY!

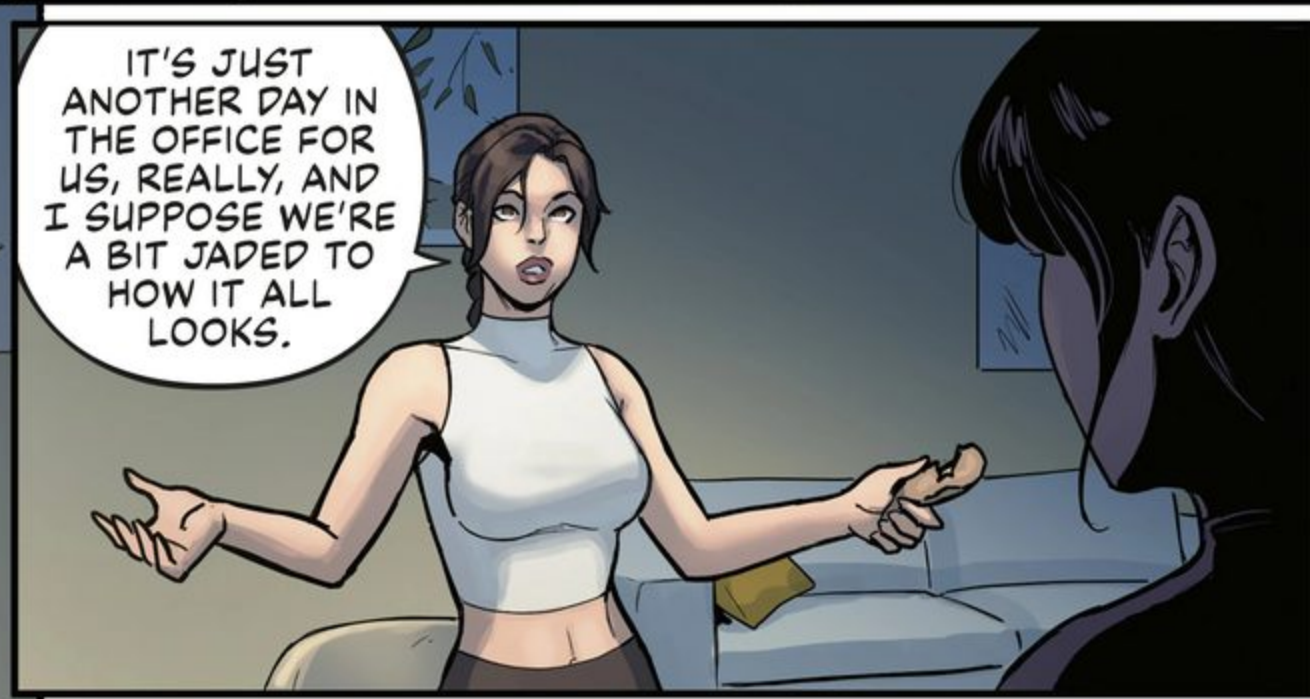


LARA, I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH, BUT IF YOU'RE HIS FRIEND YOU WON'T LET HIM DO THIS.

YOU WON'T LET HIM--MY--MY--CUORE MIO--MY LOVE--

HEY, HEY, HEY. IT'S ALL RIGHT.

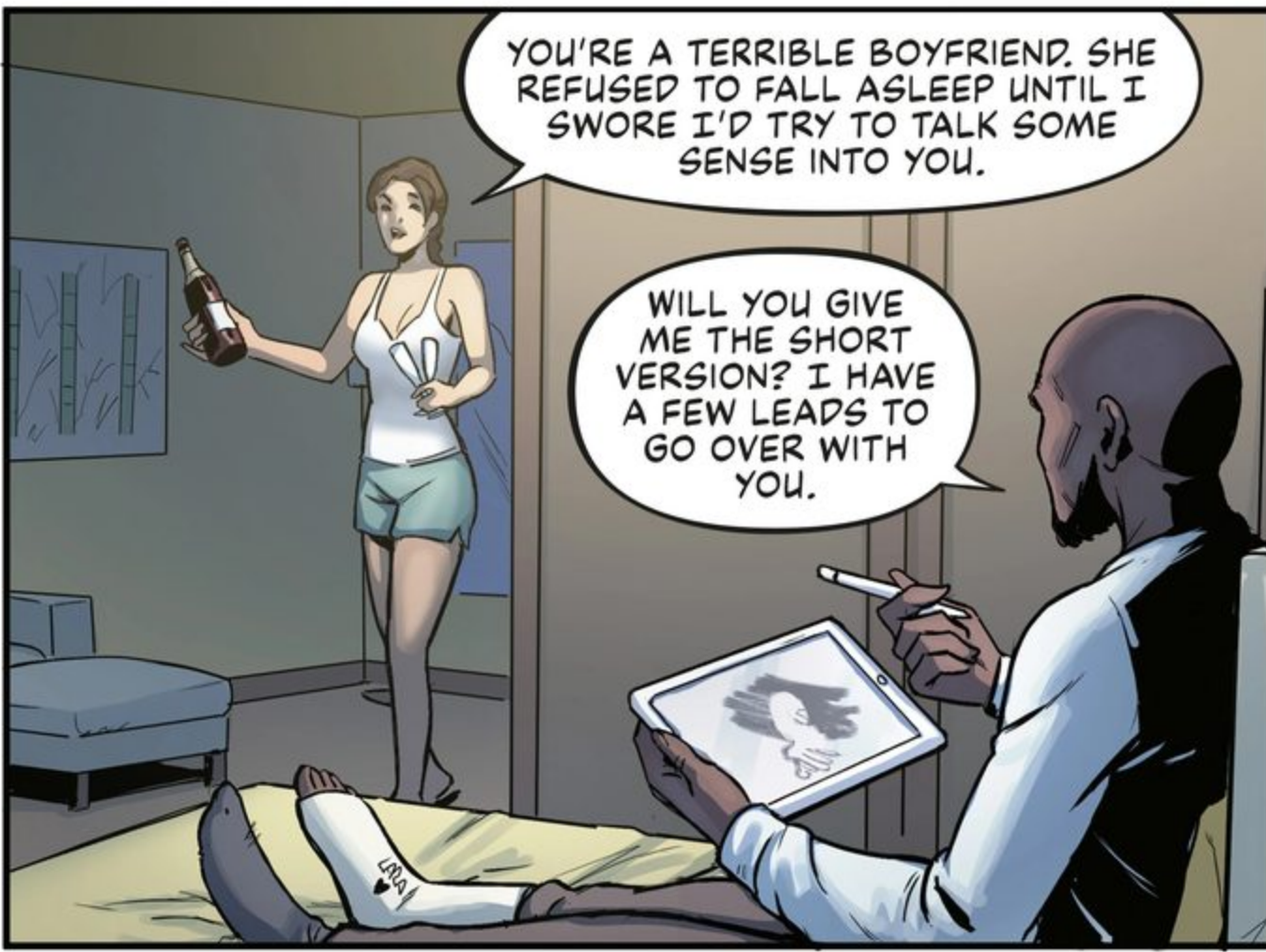
THIS MUST BE SO CONFUSING AND STRANGE TO YOU. TRAVERSING DISGUSTING CATACOMBS, SEEING CARTER LIKE THIS, EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH TONIGHT.



IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE OFFICE FOR US, REALLY, AND I SUPPOSE WE'RE A BIT JADED TO HOW IT ALL LOOKS.



LET'S GET SOME SLEEP AND SAVE DECISIONS FOR THE MORNING, OKAY?



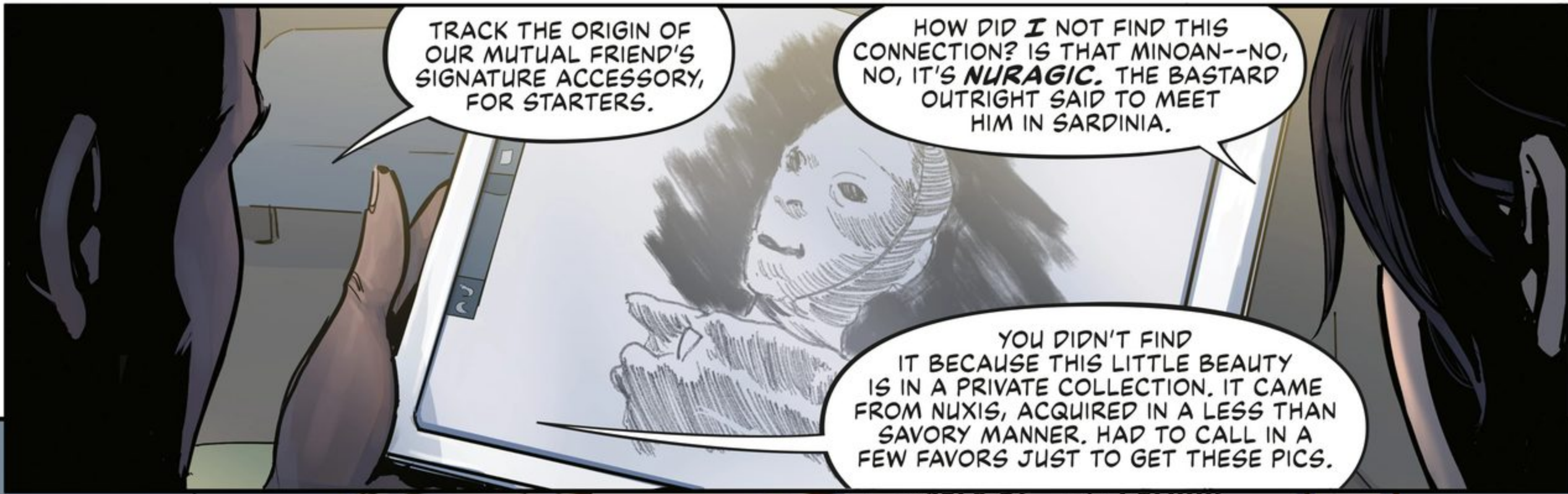
YOU'RE A TERRIBLE BOYFRIEND. SHE REFUSED TO FALL ASLEEP UNTIL I SWORE I'D TRY TO TALK SOME SENSE INTO YOU.

WILL YOU GIVE ME THE SHORT VERSION? I HAVE A FEW LEADS TO GO OVER WITH YOU.



MY FRIEND, I FEAR YOU AND I MAY LACK PERSPECTIVE. ANNA IS RIGHT TO BE WORRIED AND SHE'S RIGHT TO WANT YOU TO GO HOME.

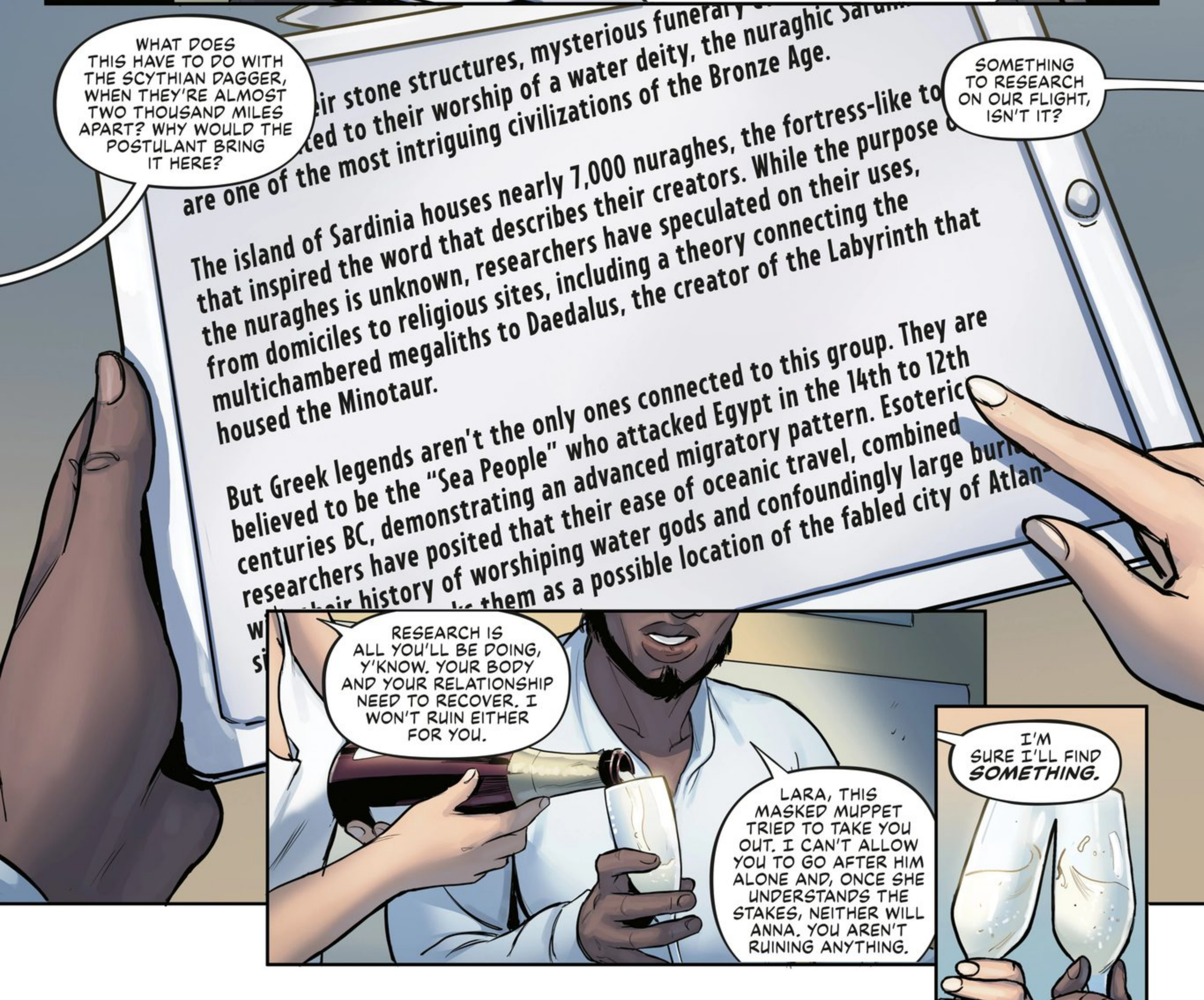
YOU'RE BUSTED FROM HEAD TO TOE. WHAT CAN YOU REALLY DO?



TRACK THE ORIGIN OF OUR MUTUAL FRIEND'S SIGNATURE ACCESSORY, FOR STARTERS.

HOW DID I NOT FIND THIS CONNECTION? IS THAT MINOAN--NO, NO, IT'S **NURAGIC**. THE BASTARD OUTRIGHT SAID TO MEET HIM IN SARDINIA.

YOU DIDN'T FIND IT BECAUSE THIS LITTLE BEAUTY IS IN A PRIVATE COLLECTION. IT CAME FROM NUXIS, ACQUIRED IN A LESS THAN SAVORY MANNER. HAD TO CALL IN A FEW FAVORS JUST TO GET THESE PICS.



WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH THE SCYTHIAN DAGGER, WHEN THEY'RE ALMOST TWO THOUSAND MILES APART? WHY WOULD THE POSTULANT BRING IT HERE?

air stone structures, mysterious funerary...
ded to their worship of a water deity, the nuraghic Sardinians
are one of the most intriguing civilizations of the Bronze Age.

The island of Sardinia houses nearly 7,000 nuraghes, the fortress-like towers that inspired the word that describes their creators. While the purpose of the nuraghes is unknown, researchers have speculated on their uses, from domiciles to religious sites, including a theory connecting the multichambered megaliths to Daedalus, the creator of the Labyrinth that housed the Minotaur.

But Greek legends aren't the only ones connected to this group. They are believed to be the "Sea People" who attacked Egypt in the 14th to 12th centuries BC, demonstrating an advanced migratory pattern. Esoteric researchers have posited that their ease of oceanic travel, combined with their history of worshipping water gods and confoundingly large burials, make them a possible location of the fabled city of Atlantis.

SOMETHING TO RESEARCH ON OUR FLIGHT, ISN'T IT?

RESEARCH IS ALL YOU'LL BE DOING, Y'KNOW. YOUR BODY AND YOUR RELATIONSHIP NEED TO RECOVER. I WON'T RUIN EITHER FOR YOU.

LARA, THIS MASKED MUPPET TRIED TO TAKE YOU OUT. I CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO GO AFTER HIM ALONE AND, ONCE SHE UNDERSTANDS THE STAKES, NEITHER WILL ANNA. YOU AREN'T RUINING ANYTHING.

I'M SURE I'LL FIND SOMETHING.





MY DAD ALWAYS TOLD ME THAT THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE SHOULD LIFT ME UP.

HE LIFTED ME UP UNTIL HE DIED. HE SUPPORTED ME, LET ME FOLLOW MY PASSIONS--I NEVER HAD TO WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING...THEN I HAD TO WORRY ABOUT **EVERYTHING.**



DOES CARTER LIFT YOU UP?



UNFORTUNATELY.



I DON'T THINK HE'LL LET YOU DOWN, ANNA. HE'S SMITTEN.

THAT'S WHY I TOLD HIM I'M GOING TO BE YOUR BACKUP IN TAKING THE POSTULANT DOWN. WHAT A **STUPID** NAME.

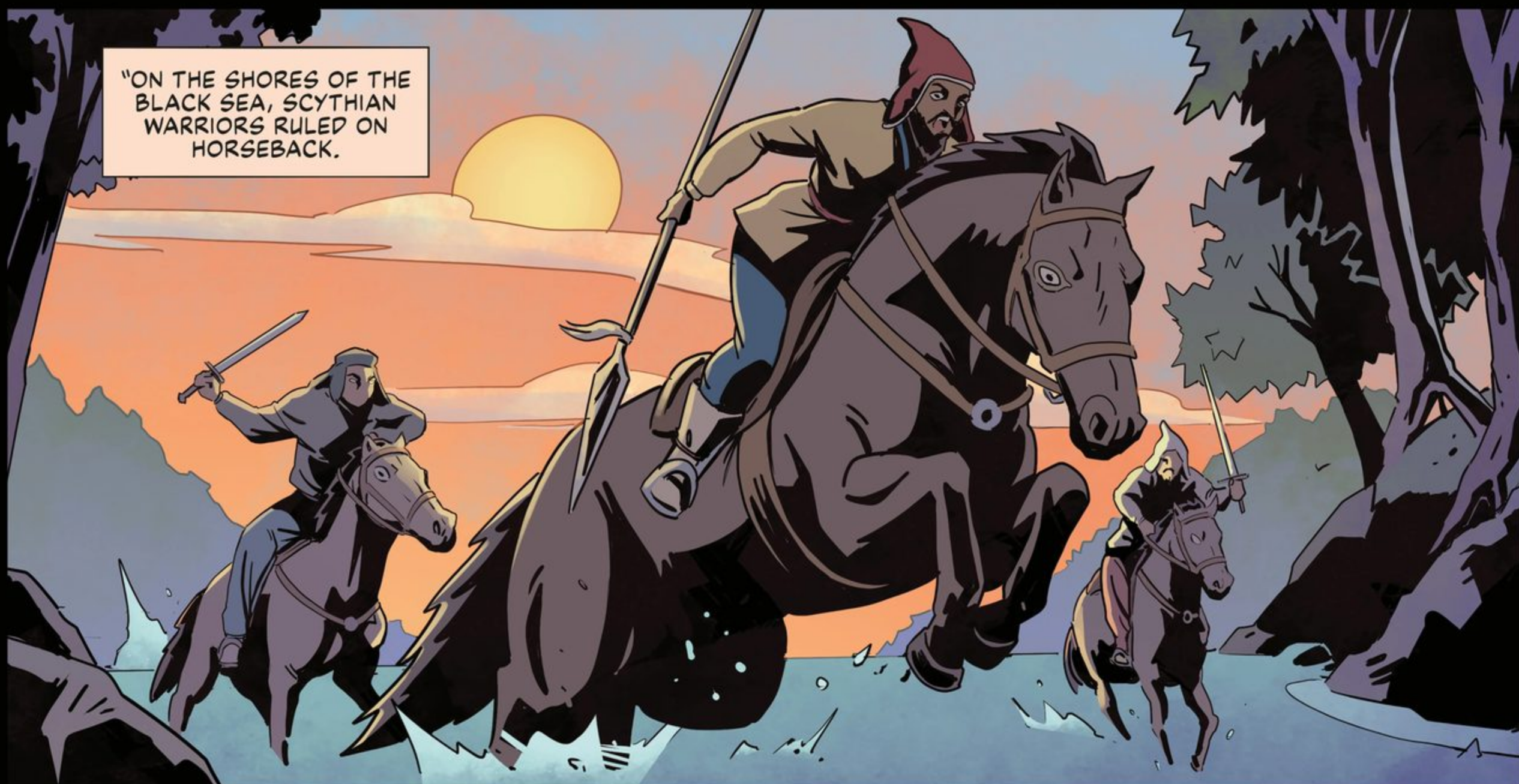


I PRACTICED THAT ALL MORNING. DID IT SOUND CONVINCING?

LIKE YOU SLITHERED IN SOUR VENOM SUGAR.



"ON THE SHORES OF THE
BLACK SEA, SCYTHIAN
WARRIORS RULED ON
HORSEBACK.



"THEY CONQUERED
LAND WITH THE EASE
OF BREATHING--
ENEMIES FALLING
ON THEIR ARROWS,
SPEARS, AND
SWORDS.



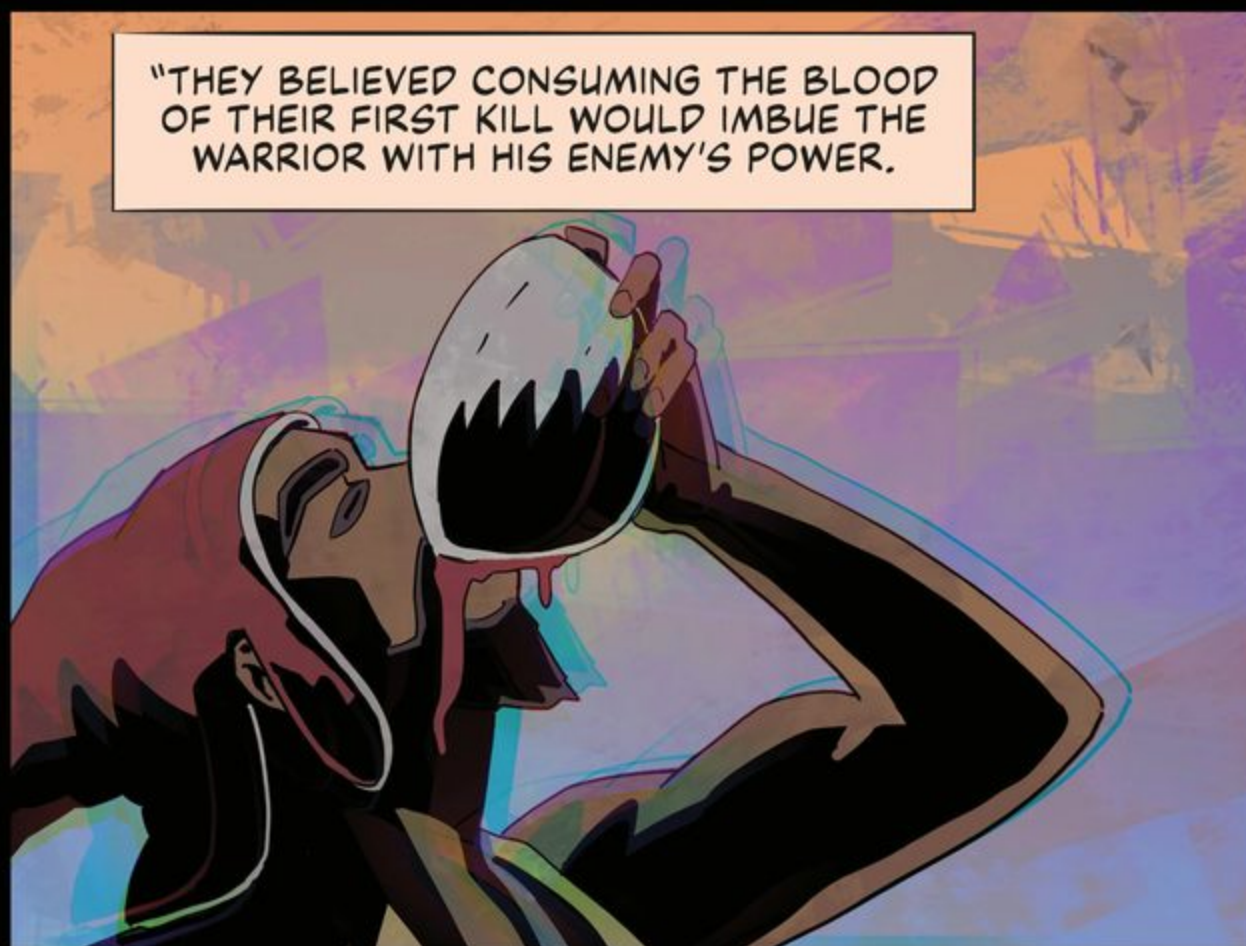
"BUT LAND CANNOT TRULY BE **OWNED**.
SOMEONE IS ALWAYS REACHING FOR WHAT
HAS BEEN CLAIMED, AND THE SCYTHIANS
KNEW THEIR REIGN WAS TEMPORARY. THEY
FEARED THE DAY A MIGHTIER BLADE
WOULD STRIKE THEM DOWN.



"SO THEY SET
OUT TO FORGE
A WEAPON NO
OTHER COULD
DEFEAT.



"THEY BELIEVED CONSUMING THE BLOOD OF THEIR FIRST KILL WOULD IMBUE THE WARRIOR WITH HIS ENEMY'S POWER.



"WHAT IF A SIMILAR OFFERING WAS MADE FOR EVEN MORE POWER?



"THE DAGGER WAS SMALLER AND FINER THAN THEIR BATTLE WEAPONS, FOR IT ONLY NEEDED TO TAKE ONE LIFE...

"ITS WIELDER'S.



"THIS SACRIFICE WOULD GRANT TRANSFORMATION INTO A GODLIKE WARRIOR-- A FIERCE, VICIOUS FIGHTER WHO COULD ONLY BE STOPPED BY THE BREAKING OF THE DAGGER.



"THE WRITER ASKED IF IT WAS EVER USED, AND THE SCYTHIAN TELLING THE STORY LAUGHED. 'THE WORLD WOULD BE OURS,' HE SAID, 'IF SUCH A THING HAD BEEN CREATED.'"



OLBIA, SARDINIA.

TELL ME
THIS ISN'T
REAL!

CARTER?
LARA?

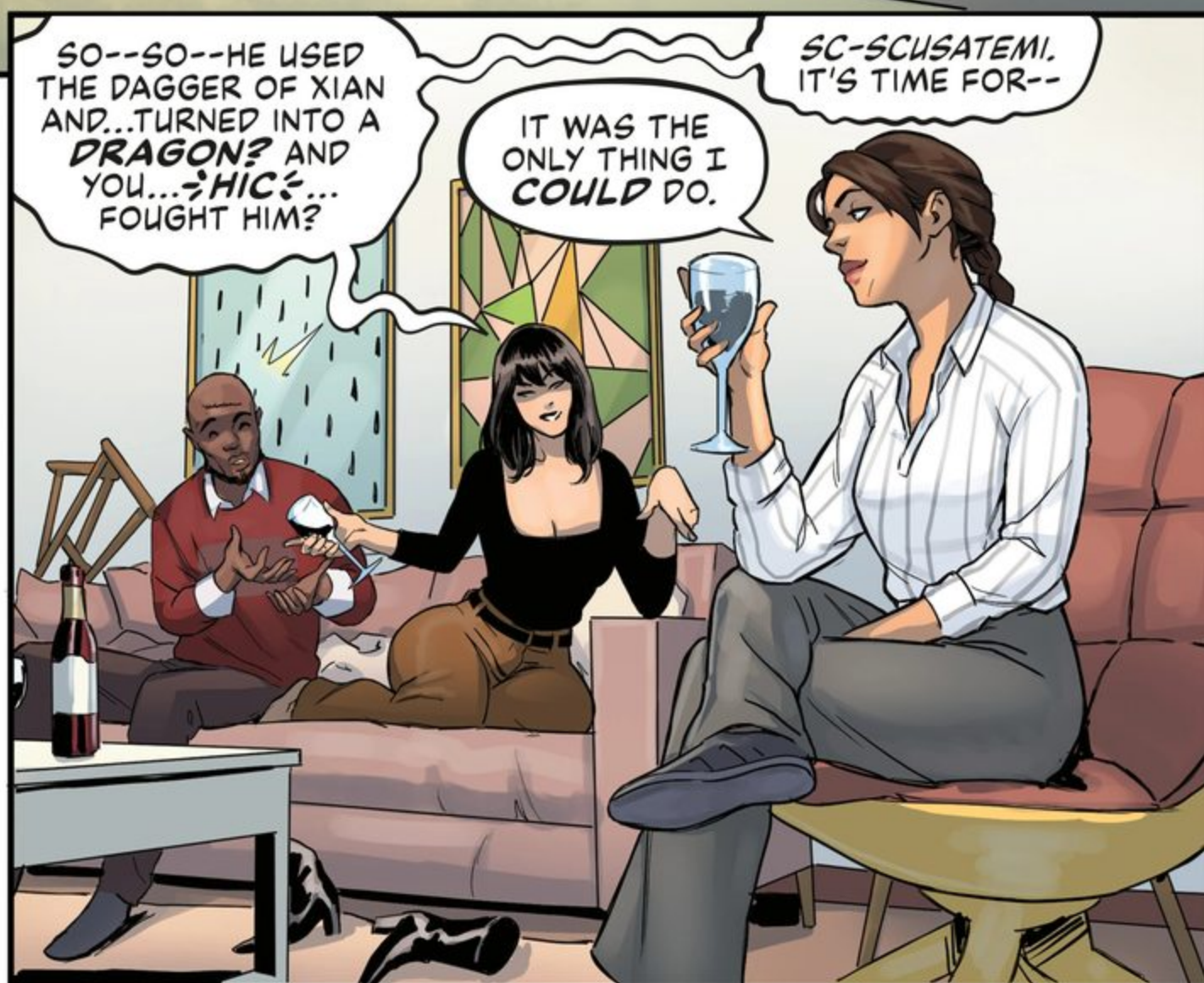


A *SISTER* DAGGER OR A
TWIN SISTER DAGGER?
HOW SIMILAR ARE
THEY?



DON'T SAY
ANYTHING ELSE
UNTIL I OPEN
THIS BOTTLE
OF WINE...

...AND
HAVE FINISHED
HALF OF IT.



SO--SO--HE USED
THE DAGGER OF XIAN
AND...TURNED INTO A
DRAGON? AND
YOU...*HIC*?...
FOUGHT HIM?

IT WAS THE
ONLY THING I
COULD DO.

SC-SCUSATEMI.
IT'S TIME FOR--



SHE
HANDLED
THAT QUITE
WELL, I
THINK.

LET'S
HOPE SHE
NEVER FINDS
OUT ABOUT
THRALLS.



YOUR PENITENT
AND WILLING VESSEL...
YOUR PENITENT AND
WILLING VESSEL...YOUR
PENITENT AND WILLING
VESSEL...YOUR PENITENT
AND WILLING
VESSEL...



MY FORM IS A CIPHER
FOR YOUR WORD. MY
MASK CONCEALS
THAT WHICH IS
YOURS--



SON OF
A--

ER, NO, OF
COURSE THAT
WASN'T MEANT
FOR YOU.

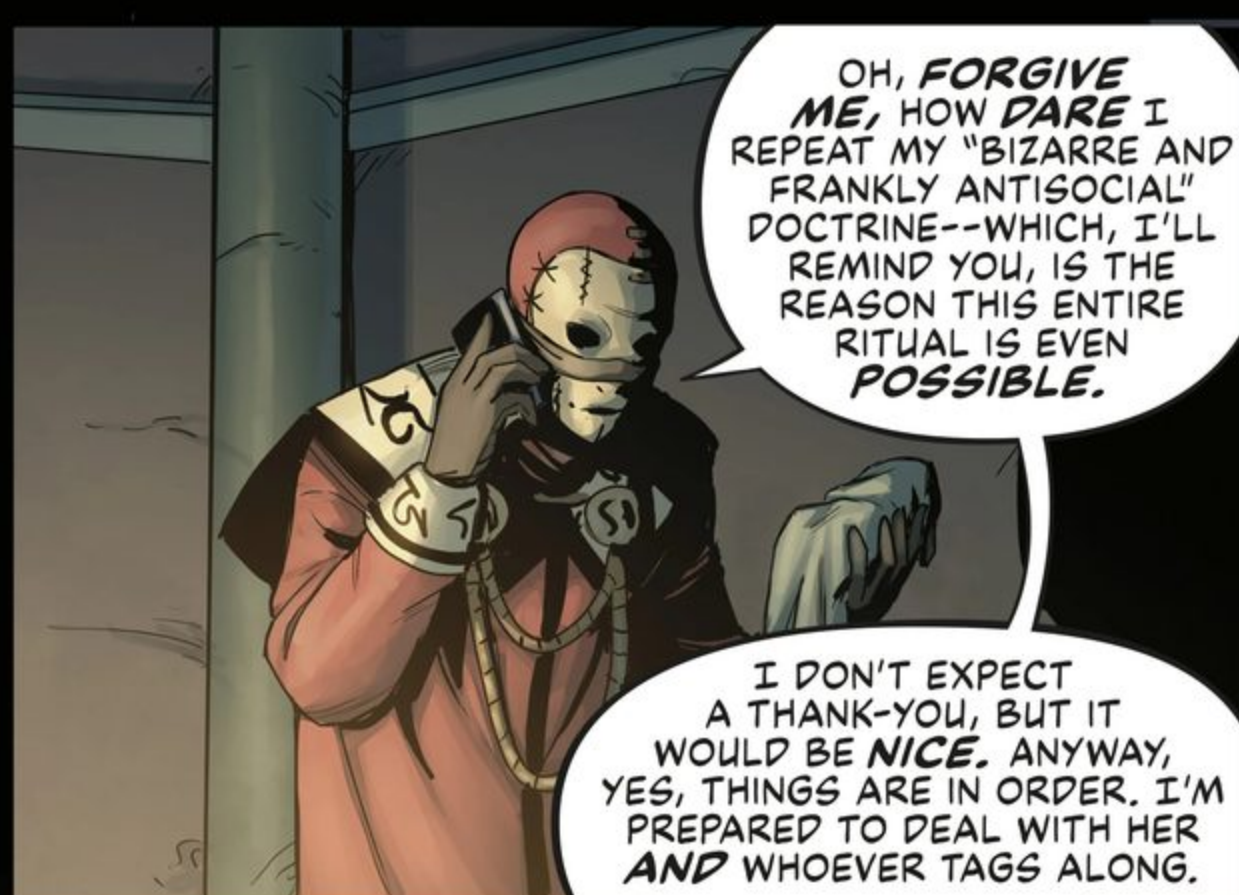


EVERYTHING IS
AS WE AGREED.
OUR ASSOCIATES
HAVE ALREADY
BEGUN THE
PREPARATIONS.



YES, I
MEAN THE **CULT**.
THAT WORD IS JUST
SO STIGMATIZED
THESE DAYS, YOU
KNOW?

I DON'T HAVE
TO BE **PART OF**
IT TO RESPECT
THEIR IDENTITY.
JUST BECAUSE
I HAVE PURGED
MYSELF OF ANY
INDIVIDUA--



OH, **FORGIVE**
ME, HOW **DARE** I
REPEAT MY "BIZARRE AND
FRANKLY ANTISOCIAL"
DOCTRINE--WHICH, I'LL
REMIND YOU, IS THE
REASON THIS ENTIRE
RITUAL IS EVEN
POSSIBLE.

I DON'T EXPECT
A THANK-YOU, BUT IT
WOULD BE **NICE**. ANYWAY,
YES, THINGS ARE IN ORDER. I'M
PREPARED TO DEAL WITH HER
AND WHOEVER TAGS ALONG.



NOW IF YOU'LL
EXCUSE ME, I HAVE
SOME ANTISOCIAL
ACTIVITIES THAT
REQUIRE MY
ATTENTION.



Crater's fangs emerged, glowing radiantly against his ashen skin. His claws raked against Barbara's oversized hoodie, seeming to question why she still wore--

PING

W
Please don't make an old man fret.



YOU'RE NOT OLD, YOU'RE PERFECTLY SEASONED.

LARA? IS THAT YOU? I HAVEN'T HEARD YOUR VOICE IN SO LONG I NEARLY FORGOT THE SOUND OF IT.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED BECOMING A COMEDIAN ONCE YOU RETIRE?



BETWEEN HIRING NEW BUILDERS TO TAKE ON THE SKYLIGHTS AND FINALLY DECIDING ON A KITCHEN BACKSPLASH, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO RETIRE.

SOUNDS GOOD TO ME. I'D BE A MESS WITHOUT YOU.



ARE YOU DOING ALL RIGHT, LARA? YOU SOUND DISTRACTED.

I'M FINE, BUT LET ME CALL YOU BACK LATER?

ALL MY LOVE.



YOU MUST'VE BEEN UP AT THE CRACK OF DAWN.

HAD TO GRAB SOME SUPPLIES. IS ANNA AWAKE? WE SHOULD HIT THE ROAD SOON.

I DON'T ENVY THE HANGOVER SHE'S BOUND TO HAVE.



**UNDISCLOSED LOCATION.
SOUTHWEST SARDINIA.**

YOU'RE CERTAIN THIS IS IT?

IT'S WHERE THE STATUE MATCHING HIS MASK WAS FOUND. THIS PLACE ISN'T ON TOURIST REGISTRIES, IT'S NOT AN OFFICIAL HISTORICAL SITE--IN FACT, MOST LOCALS DON'T EVEN KNOW IT'S HERE. IT HAS TO BE WHERE THE POSTULANT IS HIDING.

COULD--COULD SOMEONE PASS ME A NAPKIN, PLEASE?



THANK YOU. I'M SO EMBARRASSED.

THINK NOTHING OF IT. YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH QUITE A BIT THE LAST FEW DAYS.

I THINK... I'M DONE.



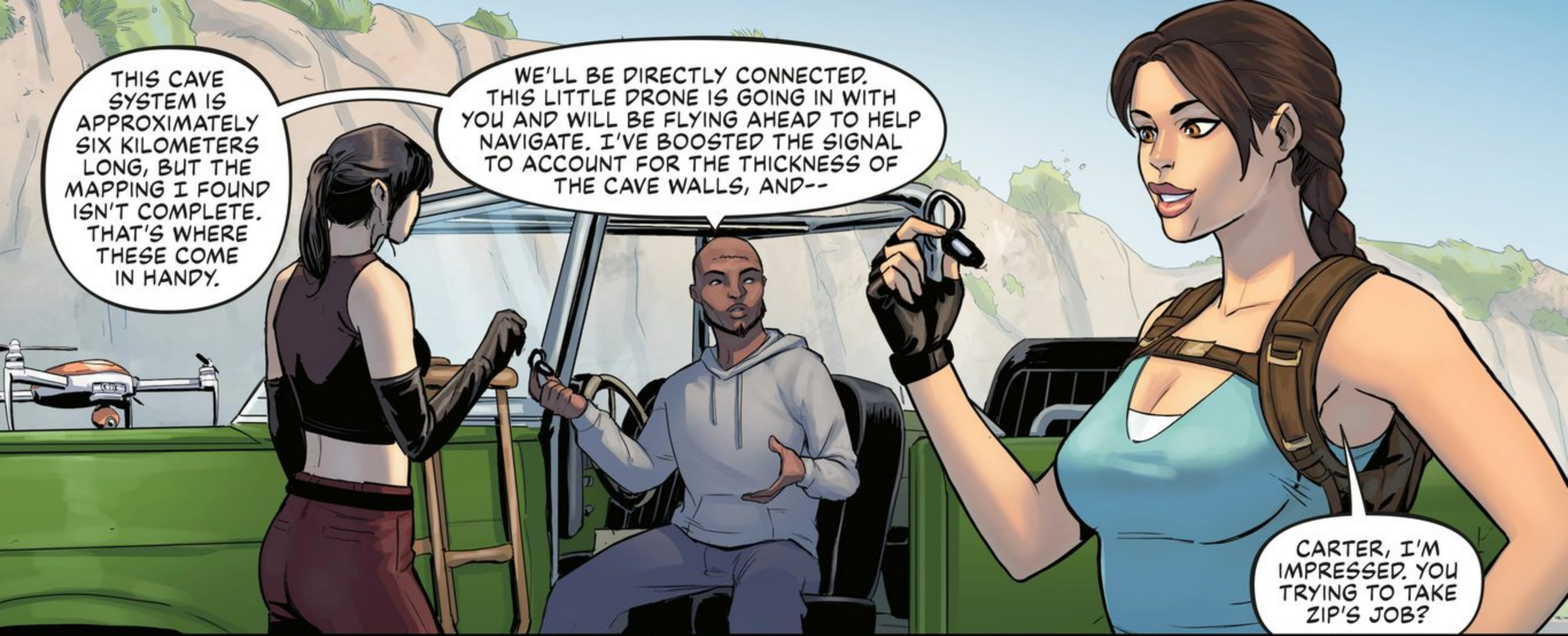
YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME WITH ME, ANNA. I'M PERFECTLY--

CAPABLE OF GOING ALONE. I KNOW YOU ARE. BUT AREN'T YOU TIRED OF DOING EVERYTHING ALONE?



YES, ACTUALLY. I AM.

GET CLEANED UP SO YOUR BOYFRIEND CAN LECTURE US ABOUT WHATEVER GADGETS HE GOT THIS MORNING.



THIS CAVE SYSTEM IS APPROXIMATELY SIX KILOMETERS LONG, BUT THE MAPPING I FOUND ISN'T COMPLETE. THAT'S WHERE THESE COME IN HANDY.

WE'LL BE DIRECTLY CONNECTED. THIS LITTLE DRONE IS GOING IN WITH YOU AND WILL BE FLYING AHEAD TO HELP NAVIGATE. I'VE BOOSTED THE SIGNAL TO ACCOUNT FOR THE THICKNESS OF THE CAVE WALLS, AND--

CARTER, I'M IMPRESSED. YOU TRYING TO TAKE ZIP'S JOB?

NO, AND DON'T YOU DARE SUGGEST THAT TO HIM.

THERE ARE THREE LARGE CHAMBERS THAT CONNECT INTO ONE LARGE UNDERGROUND LAKE--LET'S JUST EXPLORE THE CHAMBERS.

FOR ALL WE KNOW, THE POSTULANT MAY HAVE LEFT LARA CLUES TO CONTINUE THIS GAME OF CAT AND MASKED MOUSE, BUT I'D RATHER WE PREPARE FOR THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO.



SPEAKING OF WORST-CASE SCENARIO... CARTER ISN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO HAS PRESENTS.



CLEANED, LOADED, AND READY TO GO.

HOW DID YOU--

MY FATHER WAS A COLLECTOR. I FIGURED IT WAS A SMALL THING I COULD DO TO HELP.



AND IT WASN'T ENTIRELY ALTRUISTIC. THEY LOOK COOL AND I ASKED CARTER TO GET A SET FOR ME.

ALSO NOT ENTIRELY ALTRUISTIC.



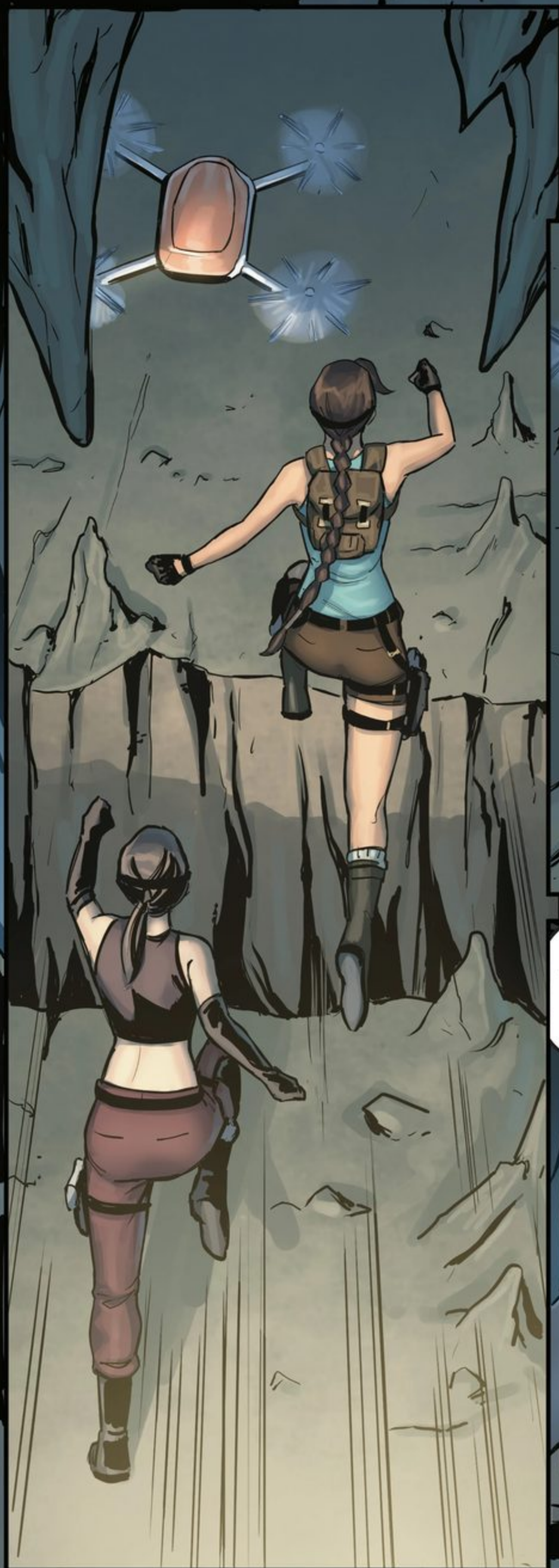
IF YOU TWO ARE FINISHED, WE HAVE AN ARTIFACT TO RETRIEVE AND A SCORE TO SETTLE.



TESTING,
TESTING. CAN
YOU HEAR
ME?

SURPRISINGLY
WELL.

TO YOUR
RIGHT IS THE MOST
DIRECT ROUTE TO THE
FIRST CHAMBER. THE
DRONE HASN'T PICKED
ANYTHING ELSE UP,
SO YOU'RE FREE TO
EXPLORE.



READY AND...ODDLY EXCITED.

I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT YOU MEAN.





CARTER,
HE'S STILL
HERE--

HUH? MY EAR-
PIECE IS GONE.
IT MUST'VE
FALLEN OUT!



LARA
LOST HER EAR-
PIECE. I DOUBT
WE'LL FIND IT, BUT
I CAN RELAY
MESSAGES.



CARTER SAYS
THE DRONE LOST
SIGNAL BUT HE'S
TRYING TO BOOST
IT AGAIN.

GOOD,
BECAUSE
WE'RE GETTING
LOW ON
WATER.



JUST UP AHEAD,
ABOUT FIFTY PACES,
IS A SMALL TUNNEL TO AN
EXIT CHAMBER. IT'LL PUT
US ON THE OTHER SIDE OF
THE CAVE, BUT HE CAN
HANDLE DRIVING THAT
FAR TO PICK US UP.

GOT
IT. TELL HIM
WE'RE HEADING
THERE NOW.



TELL ME
YOU'VE BEEN
IN WORSE,
CROFT.

OH,
ABSOLUTELY.
THIS IS NOTHING
COMPARED TO
FIGHTING OFF
SHARKS.



SHARKS I
CAN HANDLE--
BUT TIGHT
SPACES? NO,
GRAZIE.

KEEP
YOUR BREATHING
RELAXED. CARTER
WOULDN'T HAVE LED
US THROUGH HERE
IF IT WASN'T
VIALE.



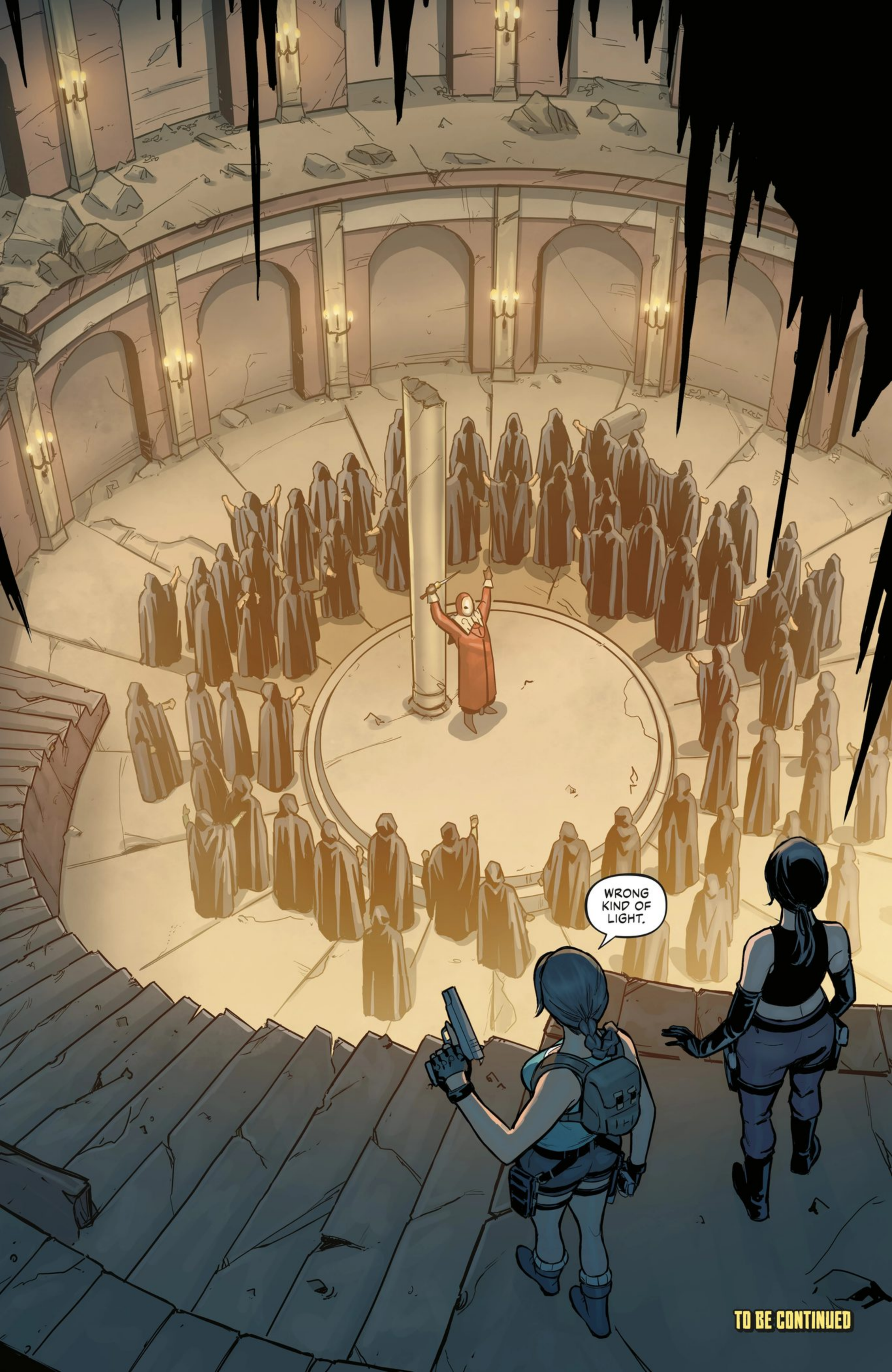
THIS--
UNNF--
DOESN'T FEEL
VERY VIALE!



DO YOU FEEL
THAT? IT'S A
BREEZE! THE
EXIT HAS TO
BE--

AAAAAAAH!





WRONG
KIND OF
LIGHT.

TO BE CONTINUED



SON OF ULTRON

"THIS FAN...
THIS MONSTER!"

